

Love that overflows * John 17:23

March 29, 2020 * Langford Community Church * Graham Gladstone

In the video, I'll be pouring one cup of water into a one cup measuring cup. Then I'll be pouring two cups of water into a one cup measuring cup. It will overflow. (Obviously).

This is a picture of the way that God loves us. God fills us with so much love that that love inevitably spills over to other people.

I was listening to a message on John 17 this week and the speaker pointed out something that I've never noticed before. It's John 17:23. Jesus is praying for His disciples and the people who will believe through their message (v.20) (that's us!) His disciples and He prays:

(20 "My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, (Joh 17:20 NIV)).

23 ...May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me (Joh 17:23 NIV).

Now, lots going on there, but let me draw your attention to the last eight words.

'You have loved them even as you have loved me.'

Don't let that slip by you.

How much does God love you? As much as He loves His Son. How much does He love His Son?

Well, how much do you love your children? Infinitely right? As much as is humanly possible. And if we love our children as much as humanly possible, God must love His Son infinitely more! Which means that God loves us infinitely more than we can possibly imagine.

Let that sink in for minute. You are as precious to the Father as Jesus is. The amount of affection that God has for His Son, is the same amount of affection that God has for you, His child.

God loves you more than you can ever imagine.

And notice in verse 23 that it's not just you; Jesus loves each of us deeply. And when we stand together as the church, as Jesus prayed, we demonstrate just how deep the love of God goes.

And I dare say that God loves us so much that we can't possibly contain it. This is love that overflows. Love that fills us and spills over from us to bless others.

That's what Jesus calls us to in John 13:34-35 – He says –

34 "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.

Jesus says - 'Since I have loved you (and I'm God so...) Since GOD has loved you with a love that never ends, YOU love others with a love that never ends.

35 By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."
(Joh 13:34-35 NIV).

We Jesus-followers should be known to the world for our love. Not for our snobbery or hypocrisy or holier-than-thou'edness or our judgmentalism; we should be known to the world for our love. When people look at us, they should see that we are SO loved by God that we can't help but love others.

God's love is a love that overflows. Love that we feel deeply in our hearts and extend to others regardless of who they are.

So let me say this – God loves you more than you could ever possibly imagine. God loves you to overflowing. Do you know that? As we come up to Easter, we see just how deeply God loves us; He was willing to die for us in the person of His Son Jesus. That is a never-ending, not-holding-anything-back kind of love that He has for us. I hope you feel that unfailing affection deeply in your soul.

And then the next question is this – what are you doing with that love? Holding onto it? Keeping it for yourself? God's love is not meant to stop with us – it is meant to overflow to others, to spill into their lives so that they themselves will know what it feels like to be loved by God.

Let me close out here by praying for you words from Ephesians 3. In Ephesians 3, verse 18 and on, Paul writes and I pray –

May your roots go down deep into the soil of God's marvelous love; 18-19 and may you be able to feel and understand, as all God's children should, how long, how wide, how deep, and how high his love really is; and to experience this love for yourselves, though it is so great that you will never see the end of it or fully know or understand it. And so at last you will be filled up with God himself (Ephesians 3:18-19 Living Bible).